

Washington State Conservation Commission Regular Meeting

FINAL MINUTES

Spokane, Washington
December 3, 2009

The Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission/WSCC) met in regular session on December 3, 2009 in Spokane, Washington. Commissioner Bahrych called the meeting to order at 10:27 a.m.

ATTENDEES

Lynn Bahrych, Chair
Fred Colvin, Vice Chair
Jim Peters, Member
Lynn Brown, Member
Tracy Eriksen, Member
Josh Baldi, Member
Lee Faulconer, Member
John Winder, Member
Chris Herron, Member
Clay Sprague, Member

COMMISSION STAFF

Mark Clark, Executive Director
Ron Shultz, Policy Director
Tom Salzer, Technical Services Manager
Debbie Becker, Financial Services Manager
Stu Trefry, District Operations &
Outreach Services Manager
Megan Finkenbinder, Program Specialist
Larry Brewer, Southeast Regional Manager
Eric Kopp, Northeast Regional Manager
Butch Ogden, Southwest Regional Manager
Karla Heinitz, Contracts Specialist
Ray Ledgerwood, Program Coordinator
Lori Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant
Josh Giuntoli, Office of Farmland Preservation

PARTNERS REPRESENTED DURING THIS MEETING:

John Larson, Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD)
Roylene Rides-at-the-Door, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Rod Hamilton, Farm Services Agency (FSA)
Don Larsen, Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

GUESTS:

John Keatley, Cowlitz CD
Darin Hought, Cowlitz CD
Jim Scott, Cowlitz CD
Carrie Kennedy, Wahkiakum CD
Joe Florek, Jr., Wahkiakum CD
Gary DeVore, Adams CD
Curtis Hennings, Adams CD
Russ Kastberg, Cowlitz CD
Doug Rushton, Thurston CD
Craig Nelson, Okanogan CD
Jan Turney, Whitman CD
Cory Aeschlmine, Whitman CD
Skip Mead, Columbia CD
Kimberly Morse, Whitman CD
Terry Bruegman, Columbia CD
Eddie Johnson, Lincoln CD
Dan Roseburg, Moses Lake CD
Michael Tobin, North Yakima CD

Introductions and Partnership Reports

Commissioner Bahrych welcomed Josh Baldi from Ecology, Clay Sprague from Department of Natural Resources and Chris Herron from WACD to the Commission.

- Commissioner Winder reported that Ray Ledgerwood, SCC staff, had come down and discussed how WSU might be able to engage in aspects of the Commission and conservation districts by providing some technical training support.
- Roylene Rides-at-the-Door reported that they currently provide an activity report prior to the Commission meetings. She would like to encourage folks to sign up for the email list.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Brown moved and Commissioner Peters seconded the motion to approve the September 17, 2009 regular Business Meeting minutes and the October 13, 2009 special Meeting minutes. Motion adopted.

Tier 4 District presentations & updates

Stu Trefry, SCC Staff, explained that the remaining Tier 4 districts who were unable to present at the September Commission meeting will be presenting. The Regional Managers provided updates on those Tier 4 districts that presented in September.

Those districts that presented and/or were provided updates on were as follows:

- Adams Conservation District
- Columbia Conservation District
- Grays Harbor Conservation District
- Moses Lake Conservation District
- South Yakima Conservation District
- Whitman Conservation District
- Cowlitz Conservation District
- Wahkiakum Conservation District

Public Comment

No public comment.

Decision on Tier 4 District presentations

Adams –Commissioner Brown moved that additional funds not be provided to Adams Conservation District until the following actions are completed: Commission staff will work with Commissioner’s Brown and Eriksen to initiate immediate contact with the district board. This contact will include discussions on rebuilding the conservation district, how to provide for and pay for a third party to review the District’s accounting and operational procedures, and ensure the issues are not repeated. The Commission will make a formal request to the Department of Ecology to jointly review grants from both Agencies, including field reviews to ensure practices are complete and meet quality standards.

Commission staff will consult with the State Auditor's office and formally request a follow-up to the previous audit and clarify any further actions needed, including actions such as sequestering District records and property so as to protect public assets. Commission staff should evaluate the use of a separate accountant from another district to conduct the review of the District's finances and operating systems after these actions and reports are completed, the Commission will reconsider further allocation of funds to the Adams Conservation District. Commission Peters seconded.

Craig Nelson, Okanogan Conservation District, stated he would be more than happy to provide folks with voucher assistance.

Motion adopted.

***Columbia* – Commissioner Eriksen moved that the Commission release the remaining funds to the Columbia Conservation District, Commissioner Herron seconded.**

Motion adopted.

***Grays Harbor* – Commissioner Colvin moved that the Commission release an additional 10% of the funds, subject to an update at our January meeting including a plan of work and deliverables for the Forestry position, Commissioner Peters seconded.**

Motion adopted.

***Moses Lake* – Commissioner Brown moved that the Commission release the remaining 40% of the funds to the Moses Lake Conservation District, Commissioner Faulconer seconded.**

Motion adopted.

***South Yakima* – Commissioner Brown moved that the Commission release 15%, exactly half of what's remaining, and reevaluate after the District's long range planning session. The Commission needs to express to the board is the need to address their staff capability for future district management. Commission Colvin seconded.**

Motion adopted.

***Whitman* – Commissioner Eriksen moved that the Commission release the remainder of the funds to the Whitman Conservation District, Commissioner Winder seconded.**

Motion adopted.

***Cowlitz* – Commissioner Colvin moved that the Commission release the remaining funds to the Cowlitz Conservation District. Motion died for lack of a second.**

Wahkiakum – Commissioner Colvin moved that the Commission release the remaining funds to the Wahkiakum Conservation District. Motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner Brown moved that we release 5% to both the Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Conservation Districts with specific instructions to reevaluate the vouchering problem. Motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner Brown moved that both the Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Conservation Districts be provided a letter re-stating the policies and procedures violated in the last grant voucher for fiscal year 09. Commission staff will include copies of the identified policies and procedures. No additional funding for fiscal year 2010 will be released until a response from the Conservation District Board of Supervisors is received by the Conservation Commission that indicates the District understands and will follow the policy in the future, Commissioner Peters seconded.

Motion adopted.

Finance

- **Financial Update**

Debbie Becker, Commission staff, recommended that she go over some comprehensive numbers at the January Commission meeting. There will be 6 months of data at that time.

- **Livestock Report**

Debbie, Becker, Commission Staff, explained that the livestock report included in the Commissioners packets is essentially a recap of the last fiscal year in terms of what was invested in Cost Share and Technical Assistance and where those dollars went as well as where they stand on the list for Cost Share.

WACD Budget Development & Allocation system

Commissioner Brown moved that the Conservation Commission use the WACD Budget Development system in concept for input for the 2011-2013 Commission budget request, Commissioner Eriksen seconded.

Motion adopted.

Legal/Technical Services

- **Franklin CD Appointment**

Commissioner Brown moved that we appoint Richard Moore to the Franklin Conservation District Board, Commissioner Herron seconded.

Motion adopted.

Policy & Intergovernmental

- **Natural Resources Reform**

Ron Shultz, Commission Staff, announced that Governor Gregoire had announced that the Conservation Commission will remain an independent agency.

Ecology Grazing Manual

Todd Bolster, Ecology Staff, reviewed a power point on Water Quality. There is a proposal to have three face to face meetings between Ecology and the Conservation District's to discuss concerns with the manual.

Adjournment

Commissioner Bahrych adjourned the meeting at 3:20 p.m.